

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment and Response comprises the Applicant's reply to the USPTO Office Action dated November 28, 2005 in the matter of present application. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 25-39 and withdrew from consideration Claims 40-45. The Applicant herewith cancels Claims 40-45 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter, as the Applicant intends to pursue such claimed subject matter in one or more continuation or divisional patent applications.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Claim 38 because of a wording informality. The Applicant has amended Claim 38 to address the Examiner's objection. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the objection of Claim 38.

The Examiner rejected Claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description. Here, the Examiner has asserted that the Applicant has claimed subject matter not disclosed in the specification or drawings. To expedite allowance of a patent, the Applicant cancels Claim 33 without prejudice and without disclaiming the subject matter of the claim.

In the Office Action, the Examiner also rejected Claims 25 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,266,112 to Heckman. In addition, the Examiner rejected Claims 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,810,944 to Sander. The Examiner also rejected Claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sander in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,929,487 to Tilman. In addition, the Examiner rejected Claims 34, 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sander in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,613,421 to Madsen.

With regard to independent Claims 25 and 36, the Applicant has amended both claims to distinguish over Heckman and Sander. More particularly, as amended, the claims included limitations pertaining to the lifting rib being located at a first elevation relative to an upper interior surface of the slider, and the closure bar being located at a second elevation relative to the upper interior surface of the slider, wherein the first elevation does not equal the second elevation at any location along the length of the slider. Support of the foregoing claim

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amendments can be seen in at least Figs. 7, 8, and 20 of the present application. With regard to the cited prior art, neither Heckman nor Sander disclose such a configuration. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejections of Claims 25 and 36.

With regard to the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of Claim 36, both Sander and Madsen fail to disclose the limitations of amended Claim 36 as described above. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of Claim 36.

In the rejection of Claim 30, the Examiner has asserted that Fig. 2 of Heckman discloses first and second mating surfaces with identical profiles. The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Upon review of the Heckman profiles shown in Fig. 2, it is readily apparent that the left and right mating surfaces of Heckman are not identical. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection of Claim 30.

Having addressed the rejections of independent Claims 25 and 36 and placed such claims in a condition for allowance, the Applicant respectfully submits that dependent Claims 27-35 and 37 are also in a condition of allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and/or §103(a) rejections of Claims 27-35 and 37.

In addition to the above-described rejections, the Examiner has also rejected Claims 25-39 on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,721,999. To address this rejection, a Terminal Disclaimer has been executed and has been submitted herewith. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting of Claims 25-39.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone

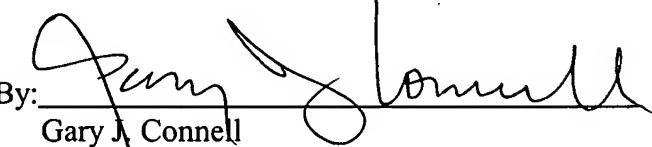
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conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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